

A
DECLARATION
OF

William Lentball Esquire.

SPEAKER of the Honorable House of
COMMONS,

Shewing the Grounds and Reasons
which moved him to absent himselfe from
attending the service of the House on
Friday, *July 30. 1647.*



L O N D O N,

Printed for *George Whittington* at the signe of
the blew Anchor near the Exchange. 1647.

1747

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A DECLARATION of *William*
Lemball Esquire, Speaker of the Hono-
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Although it may happily be contrary to the expectation of some, that I attend not the service of the House of Commons at this time, as I have constantly done for almost seven yeares last past, yet can it not be reasonably expected by any that well consider the violence offered to both Houses of Parliament, and to my selfe in particular on Munday last, in so much that I can safely take it upon my conscience, and so I doubt not may all the Members of both Houses also, they sate in continuall feare of their lives, and by terror thereof were compelled to passe such Voets as it pleased an unruly multitudo to force upon them; which as I did then openly declare in the House, so I cannot but helieve that they are all void, and null, being extorted by force and violence, and in that manner that they were, and I cannot any longer dis-

pence with my selfe to be an instrument in passing such Votes, or to give any colour or shadow of Parliamentary authority unto them, which are not the Voter of the representative body of the Kingdome, but of a tumultuous multitude as thole must needs bee accompted, that seemed to passe the House on Munday last, and which shall passe hereafter until better provision be made for the safe and free sitting of the Houses of Parliament, there being no effectual course taken by the City since the last adjournment of the Houses to prevent the like tumults for the future, no nor so much as a Declaration from them to shew their dislike thereof, but on the contrary it is generally voiced in the Towne, that there will be a farre greater confluence of Apprentises, Reformadoes and others, on Friday at the Parliament doores; and particularly notice was given to me, that after they had made the House vote what they pleased, they would destroy me; I had likewise information given me, that there would be a great number of Apprentises of a contrary Opinion, and affections to the other, about the Parliament doores: on friday morning, which I foresaw must of necessity cause a great combustion, and in probability

bility occasion much blood-shed, the preventing of which mischeifes, together with the considerations aforesaid, have weighed more with mee then any thing which may concerne my particular, and especially having served the House faithfully and diligently for the space of very neer seven years in a true and Parliamentary way of proceedings, that *I* might not now be made a servant to such a multitude to transferre upon them the colour of Parliamentary authority, therewithall to abuse and deceive the mindes, and to destroy the lives, liberties and estates of the people of this Kingdome; and having taken a solemne Protestation and Covenant in my place and calling to maintaine the Priviledges of Parliament, and the Rights and liberties of the Subjects, I could not now satisfie my selfe, but by absenting my selfe at this time, rather then by my presence to give any shadow or countenance of the authorite of Parliament to such apparent violations thereof; neither can the omission of a circumstance, or some formality in the adjournment of the House, (when through force and violence it cannot meet and sit in any sort as a Parliament, be any prejudice to the future meeting and proceedings thereof, when it may



may meet and sit againe as a free Pailliament, it being well knowne that nothing can dissolve this Parliament but an Act of Parliament.

When a company of Apprentises, Reformadoes and others; shall cal the Ordinances of Parliament pretended Ordinances; shall lock the doores of the Houses upon them, shall sweare not to let them out till they had passed what they pleased concerning the *Militia of London*, and other things (though the Houses had immediatly before Voted otherwise) shall threaten the Houses in case they did not instantly satisfie their demands; shall knock, whoote and hollow continually at the Parliament door that the Members could not be heard to speak or debate; and after that the House of Commons had passed a Vote concerning the *Militia of London*, and that the Speaker by the Vote had judged the major part to be for the Negative, shall not suffer the House to be divided, but in a threatening way require those that gave their Votes against them to come out to them if they would; when after the House was adjourned they shall by maine force thrust back the Speaker againe into the House, and force the Members in their presence and sight (divers of them thrusting into the House to vote what they

they demanded, when they shall justly pull and hale the speaker, all the way he went down to his Coach, and force him to avoide their violence, to betake himsele to the next coach he could get into for refuge, when they shall breath forth bloody threats against the Members as they came out of the house, and since against me in particular at the next meeting of the House (as I am credibly informed) and when there is no appearance, but that they will continue to do as formerly they have done, or far worse on friday, I could not in discharge of my trust, Protestation and Covenant sit in the Chair of the House of Commons, whilst it shall be in such a condition, but so soone as it may sit againe in freedome and safety, I shall be ready to attend the service thereof, but till then as I have upon the four-mentioned grounds, fully satsified my owne conscience, so I doubt not but I shal give the whole Kingdom (whose interest is most concerned in it) ample satsfaction in the necessity of my absence.

William Lenthall

Speaker.